

## HILLANDALE BULLETIN – October 2024

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **HCA PUBLIC MEETING**

**Tuesday, October 29, 2024**

**Meet and Greet: 7:00-7:30 / Program: 7:30-8:30 / HCA Business 8:30-9:00**

**We Achieve Center (formerly CHI) / 10501 New Hampshire Avenue**

**Speaker: Mr. Jason Cokinos, Police Commander of 3<sup>rd</sup> District, MCPD**

**“Public Safety in Hillandale”**

**Please come to hear our new district police commander speak about public safety issues and answer your questions!**

NOTE: There will be a bingo game in our usual meeting room. You can pass through this room and go across the hall to the room where our meeting will be held, or come in the front door and walk straight back to our meeting—just follow the signs and guides.

#### **Hillandale neighbors: Please mark your calendar for the HCA HOLIDAY PARTY!!!**

**Sunday, December 8, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.**

**We Achieve Center / 10501 New Hampshire Avenue**

**Families Welcome – Santa Claus to Appear!**



HCA’s Annual Holiday Party will be held this year for the first time since 2019, so come share .the holiday spirit with your neighbors! HCA will provide one meat entrée, hot dogs for kids, and beverages. This is a potluck meal and we ask everyone to please bring a main dish, side dish, or dessert to share.

**Please come and celebrate the holidays with us!**

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#### **Friends of White Oak - COMMUNITY MEETING**

**Tuesday, November 12, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

**White Oak Recreation Community Center**

**1700 April Lane, Silver Spring, MD**

VIVA WHITE OAK is potentially one of the largest developments to date in Montgomery County. This presentation by MCB Real Estate will include information about the development, which is currently slated to include 3,000 townhouses and apartments, a public elementary school, a large amount of retail space (which might include hotels) and several laboratory buildings to facilitate life sciences development opportunities in the East County. MCB Real Estate filed its Sketch Plan for the project on September 9, 2024, and the County accepted it on September 23, 2024. MCB also filed its Preliminary Plan, but its approval for it is still pending. Please see additional information at the end of this Bulletin for a summary of a meeting in which development plans were presented to the community.

## **RECENT EVENTS**

### **HCA's Public Meeting on June 13, 2024: "Annapolis Forum"**

Attendees filled the room for this meeting to hear from all three of our District 20 Delegates from the Maryland State House--David Moon, Jheanelle Wilkins, and Lorig Charkoudian--as well as an aide to State Senator Will Smith. They spoke and answered questions for more than an hour and received an ovation from the attendees. For details on the discussion, please refer to the Minutes for that meeting, which are posted on the HCA website.

### **HCA's National Night Out – August 6, 2024**

Our first-ever National Night Out at Hillandale Park drew a huge crowd and first responders from the 3<sup>rd</sup> District MCPD; National Capital Park Police (accompanied by one of their horses), Maryland State Transit Police, Maryland State Troopers, and our own Hillandale Volunteer Fire Department. This was a joint event co-sponsored by the Friends of White Oak, who graciously paid for 200 ice cream treats from Sweet Cone, LLC that were handed to a very appreciative crowd. Huge thanks to Friends of White Oak for their generous gift!

Mega thanks to the members of the HCA Board who participated in planning, publicity, setup, and cleanup.

### **Redeveloping the Amalgamated Transit Union Site in Hillandale**

At a meeting on June 27, 2024, Mr. Patrick Marr presented development plans under consideration by WRS Inc. (<https://www.wrsrealestate.com/>) for 10000 New Hampshire Avenue, at the intersection of New Hampshire Avenue and Powder Mill Road. This is the former site of the Amalgamated Transit Union's 46-acre international headquarters and is a major economic development project tied to the 2014 White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan. The property is split by a streambed crossing north-south through the property. Mr. Marr remarked that because of the long County approval process, construction would begin about 2027.

The draft plan discussed at the meeting included the construction of 112 townhomes west of the streambed; on the east side, the developers proposed renovating five of the nine existing buildings into 138 low-rise apartments and other facilities. The other four buildings would be demolished to make space for two apartment towers (178 apartments) and five retail buildings surrounding a surface parking lot. Mr. Marr noted his company was not considering bringing in big box stores like Costco or Walmart; instead, they hope to have one large grocery store and one to three smaller anchors like Crate and Barrel. There would also be multiple dining options, a potential entertainment tenant, and smaller local/regional retailers.

Montgomery County cannot provide the New Hampshire Avenue upgrades needed to accommodate the increased traffic resulting from this development. In addition, the developers were considering options for extending access to the townhouses via Royal Road and Xaviera Road, along with various other configurations. All the proposed traffic alternatives are

contingent on significant reconfigurations of current traffic patterns on New Hampshire Avenue and Powder Mill Road.

Many people attending the meeting were highly critical of the proposed traffic plans, particularly the plan to extend Royal Road and Xaviera Road to the new development. Others noted that traffic on Powder Mill Road was already at maximum capacity. Mr. Marr noted these plans are preliminary only and that WRS Inc. values community perspectives on their proposals.

The meeting was sponsored by Friends of White Oak and WRS, Inc. Along with interested residents, several elected officials were in attendance: Ms. Kristin Mink (Montgomery Councilmember for the 5<sup>th</sup> District), Mr. David Moon (Maryland House of Delegates), Ms. Jheanelle Wilkins (Maryland House of Delegates), and Ms. Rose Stutz (representative for Ms. Lorig Charkoudian, Maryland House of Delegates).

### **MD 650 (New Hampshire Avenue) Pedestrian Safety Action Plan Project**

A public informational workshop was held on September 9, 2024, at Cresthaven Elementary School so that residents could hear more about proposed safety plans for a stretch of New Hampshire Avenue. The Maryland State Highway Administration has included this section of MD State Hwy 650 (New Hampshire Avenue) as one of five key corridors in their Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP). This zone begins at the intersection of Powder Mill Road (State Hwy 212) and continues south on New Hampshire Avenue until it reaches University Boulevard (State Hwy 193). From 2018-2022, 1,019 crashes occurred on this segment of New Hampshire Avenue: 45 crashes involved pedestrians, and 8 of those pedestrians died. It is worth noting that if the PSAP was extended about one-half mile north, it would include intersections where New Hampshire Avenue meets Chalmers Road and Rodney Road, where two of these pedestrian fatalities occurred.

According to the current project timeline, PSAP design will be complete by the summer of 2025, when construction will begin, and construction is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2026. Safety improvements can include traffic calming devices, improved crossings and sidewalks, reduced speed limits, enhanced bus stops, and options to improve bike safety. More information is available at this link:

<https://mdot.maryland.gov/tso/pages/newsroomdetails.aspx?newsId=820&PageId=38>

### **Community Meeting on the Sketch Plan for VIVA White Oak**

On May 7, 2024, the Baltimore-based MCB Real Estate Corporation held a meeting at Galway Elementary School to present plans and answer community questions about VIVA White Oak, a 280-acre site bordered by Cherry Hill Road, Tech Road, and the FDA campus. The current development plan includes 3,000 residential units, a large retail area with one or two hotels, a public elementary school, a public park with walking trails, and several buildings suitable for research laboratories. The residential units will consist of townhouses and apartment buildings.

The proximity of this development to FDA, Adventist Hospital, and the Montgomery College East County campus could result in new economic development opportunities by attracting life science research organizations and aligned businesses to the area. The hotels would augment this development by providing the FDA with facilities with ample meeting space to host conventions. It could also fulfill needs for more housing in this part of Montgomery County.

VIVA White Oak is being designed as a connected, livable, and walkable community with a 25 mile-per-hour speed limit. Highway 29, Cherry Hill Road, and Healing Way will all provide access; the first two are public roads and the developer and the county are splitting costs for work needed to ensure access, but Healing Way is a private road and the developer will assume the full cost of creating access. Attendees expressed concerns about traffic, which is already challenging.

The entire plan could take 15 years before it is complete. The tentative timeline includes starting road and infrastructure construction in 2025 and opening the town center in 2028. A strong commercial/retail core with a grocery store, fitness center, and restaurants would help create the demand for housing.

Minutes of the meeting are at this link:

<https://eplans.montgomeryplanning.org/UFS/37383/119611/05-PMTG-320240080.pdf/05-PMTG-320240080.pdf>

Slides presented at the meeting are at this link:

[https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/exec/Resources/Files/Viva%20White%20Oak%20pre-submission%20community%20meeting%20presentation\(1\).pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/exec/Resources/Files/Viva%20White%20Oak%20pre-submission%20community%20meeting%20presentation(1).pdf)

**There are currently several vacancies on the HCA Board:**

**Vice-President**

**Old Hillandale At-Large Representative**

**Beautification Committee Chair**

**Housing and Permitting Committee Chair**

**Transportation Ad-Hoc Committee Chair**

**Hillandale Swim and Tennis Club Representative**

**West Hillandale Swim Club Representative**

**If you would like to consider joining the HCA Board, please contact HCA President Jeremiah Pope at [hcapresident44@gmail.com](mailto:hcapresident44@gmail.com).**